Helms and Senator McCarthy managed to build national constituencies by appealing to class prejudice and exploiting fear of the "Red menace."

Steve Neal is the author of four books on American politics, including "Dark Horse: A Biography of Wendell Willkie."

editors are so hostile to the Klan but so apologetic for racial extremists on the other side."

Mr. Furgurson reports that in the 1950's Senator Helms complained about a " 'severe restriction' placed on speakers at a certain Raleigh civic club — 'each speaker is advised in advance that he is not to tell a joke

Southern politics. And one of the lessons of his book is that even if Senator Helms's brand of racial politics has worked in North Carolina, his race-baiting has eliminated him as a serious contender for a future slot on a Republican national ticket.

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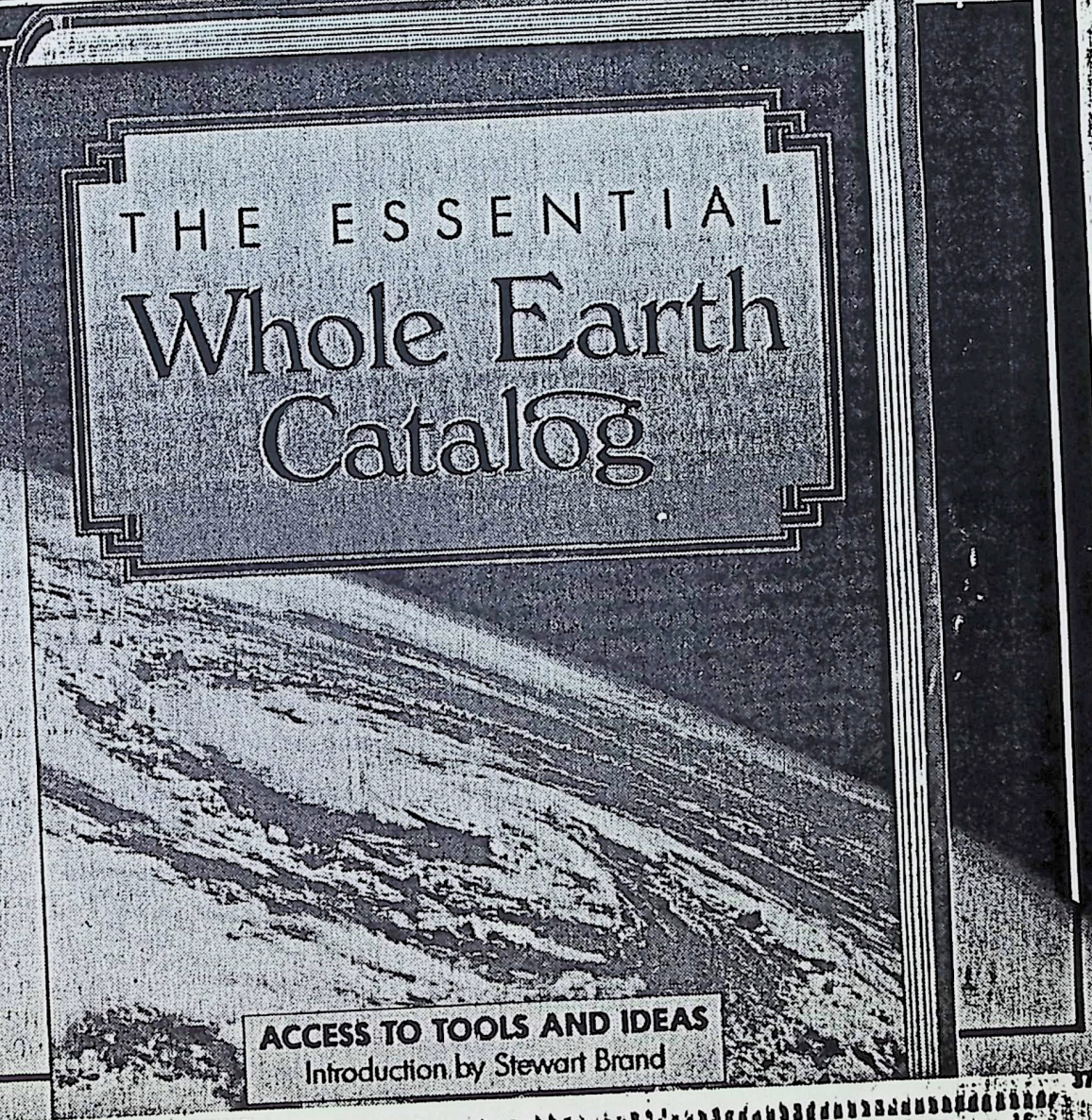

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